

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



FISCAL NOTE

HB 1273 - SB 1500

February 17, 2019

SUMMARY OF BILL: Creates the Political Party Registration Act (Act). Requires voter registration applications include a space for voters to declare a state political party affiliation, no affiliation, or other. Prohibits a person from voting in the primary election for a party with which they have not declared an affiliation via means provided through this Act. If a voter wishes to vote in a primary election, the voter's registration record must indicate the party for whose primary such voter wishes to cast a vote.

Requires that the voter registration card provided to a registered voter by the administrator of elections attest to whether such voter has specified an affiliated political party. Establishes that the administrator of elections is not required to re-issue registration cards for voters who were registered prior to July 1, 2019, solely for the purposes of indicating that a voter has not yet registered with their party affiliation or for modifying the content of the registration cards pursuant to this Act.

Establishes that it is a Class D felony offense to vote in an election for which one is not entitled to vote pursuant to this Act. Requires the State Election Commission to provide signs to coordinators of elections, whom shall post such signs in a conspicuous place and which shall inform voters of this new Class D felony offense and of the ability to select a statewide political party affiliation by completing a statewide political party affiliation form.

Requires the application for ballot forms for a primary election include a place for the administrator of elections to indicate the voter's statewide political party affiliation as recorded on the voter's permanent registration record as of the registration deadline for such primary election.

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:

Increase State Revenue - \$17,800/One-Time/Strategic Technology Solutions

Increase State Expenditures - \$72,100/One-Time/Division of Elections

Assumptions:

- According to the Department of State, the Division of Elections (Division), a field indicating a voter's declared party affiliation will be added to the statewide voter registration database and require the updating of eight computer programs/interfaces.

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- This work will be performed by the Department of Finance and Administration's Strategic Technology Solutions (STS), at a rate of \$89 per hour and will require 25 hours of labor per program/interface.
- There will be a one-time increase in state expenditures to the Division of \$17,800 (\$89 per hour x 25 hours x 8 programs) for updating the computer programs/interfaces as well as a corresponding one-time increase in state revenue to STS of \$17,800.
- The online voter registration application would also require updating at a rate of \$115 per hour and require approximately 10 hours of labor.
- The updating of online voter registration applications will not be performed by STS.
- Updating online voter registration forms will result in a one-time increase in state expenditures to the Division estimated to be \$1,150 (\$115 per hour x 10 hours).
- The state will also be required to reprint voter registration applications resulting in a one-time increase in state expenditures of \$52,650 (1,500,000 applications x \$.0351 per application).
- The State Election Commission will incur a one-time cost estimated to be \$508 to place signs at polling locations indicating that participating in a vote to which one is not entitled is a Class D felony offense.
- The proposed legislation will result in a total one-time increase in state expenditures to the Division of \$72,108 (\$17,800 computer program updates + \$1,150 online voter registration updates + \$52,650 updated printed voter registration applications + \$508 signs).
- Based on prior information from local administrators of elections, modifications of voter registration software for capturing party affiliation will not involve an additional cost to county election commission offices since the modifications are expected to be covered under the annual service agreement.
- Any impact to county election commission offices can be accommodated within existing resources without additional personnel or without a reduction in other budgeted items.
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 2-19-107, a person commits a Class D felony if such person registers or votes or attempts to register or vote in any manner where or when the person is not entitled to. The proposed legislation would expand such violation to include voting in the primary election for a party with which a person has not declared an affiliation. It is assumed that there will not be a significant number of additional Class D felony offenses committed as a result of this legislation.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

/jdb